

## 8u Playing Rules

### Section 1: Game Equipment

- 1.1) Athens Youth Softball will provide official game balls for each game. The game ball used will be Core .47/11inch/Optic Yellow.
- 1.2) Facemasks are required on all batting helmets. Chin straps are optional.
- 1.3) Any bat marked "Official Softball" with a BPF 1.20 can be used in league play. **For All-stars, bats must have USSSA thumbprint with a BPF 1.20.**
- 1.4) Catchers are required to be in full gear including: approved youth face mask, chest protector, and shin guards.
- 1.5) We recommend all infielders wear a facemask. Circle player, 1st baseman, and 3rd baseman **MUST** wear a facemask while on defense.
- 1.6) Metal cleats are not allowed.

### Section 2: Game Structure

- 2.1) The bases will be 60'.
- 2.2) 6 innings constitutes a complete game. In case of rain, 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
- 2.3) Each team will field 10 players on defense, with the 6 standard infielders and 4 players in the outfield.
- 2.4) Games will have a 75 minute time limit. A new inning shall not start after the 75 minute time limit.
- 2.5) If the score is tied at the end of regulation, no more than one extra inning shall be played. If after one extra inning the score is still tied, it shall remain a tie (Exception: tournament). International Tiebreaker Rule is in effect during regular season and tournament play.
- 2.6) Each inning teams must change sides after 3 outs or a maximum of 7 runs per half inning, whichever comes first.

### Section 3: Team Coaches

- 3.1) Teams may have the following coaches:
  - a. Offense- Coach Pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> Base Coach, 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Coach, and Dugout Coach.
  - b. Defense– Two Coaches in the outfield in foul territory (even or behind your left and right outfielder) **OR** One Coach in center field behind defensive player. Other than the defensive coaches on the field, only one coach may sit outside the dugout.

### Section 4: Game Play

- 4.1) Regular bunting or drag bunting is not allowed. Slap-hitting is allowed.
- 4.2) Base runners cannot steal.
- 4.3) The Pitching Coach will pitch from 35 feet. The Pitching Coach must have one foot in contact with the rubber until ball is released.
  - a. Must make every effort to avoid a live ball, defensive team, and base runner.
  - b. Cannot talk to the batter after releasing the ball.
- 4.4) The pitching circle will be drawn at 40 feet with a line across the middle. The player pitcher must maintain both feet inside the circle and behind the line until the ball is put into play.
- 4.5) Each batter will receive 5 pitches or 3 strikes, whichever occurs first. If the batter fouls the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike or 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, the at bat shall continue until the ball is put into play or a strikeout is recorded. No walks allowed.
- 4.6) A batted ball that hits the pitching coach shall be ruled a dead ball and the pitch replayed. The pitching coach must make an attempt to get out of the way of a batted ball. If the Coach Pitcher intentionally interferes with the play (in the umpires judgement) he/she will be given a warning for 1st incident. The 2nd incident could result in the Coach Pitcher being ejected.
- 4.7) Play is considered live until a defensive player has control of the ball and in front of the lead runner or is in controlled possession of a defensive player inside the circle. This is subject to the umpire's judgment. (Running through the circle during a play does not stop play.)
- 4.8) If the baserunner has started advancing toward the next base in the umpires judgement, then the next base shall be awarded to the baserunner.
- 4.9) The infield fly rule shall not be in effect at any time during the course of play. Any infield fly, regardless of the location of base runners, shall be considered a live ball and in play.
- 4.10) Defensive players must stay behind the safety line on 1st and 3rd baselines until the ball is put into play. Safety lines will be marked at 30 feet on each baseline.
- 4.11) Mercy Rule: 21 runs after 4 innings or 11 runs after 5 innings
- 4.12) Courtesy runner is allowed if the player is injured during that at bat or while on base. Player to be utilized as the courtesy runner will be the player that made the last out and is not on base.